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INFO OCT-31 ARA-11 EUR-12 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 L-03
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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
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E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: SHUM, UY

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS VISIT OF FRENCH AND SWISS PHYSICIANS'
GROUP

REF: STATE 217825

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1. ON 5 SEPTEMBER, ONE SWISS AND THREE FRENCH PHYSICIANS REPRESENTING THE INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS "MEDICINES SANS FRONTIERES" CONCLUDED A 12-DAY VISIT TO MONTEVIDEO. THEY HAD COME TO URUGUAY TO INQUIRE ABOUT THE STATUS OF IMPRISONED DOCTORS, DETAINEES BELIEVED TO BE SUFFERING FROM PHYSICAL DISABILITY OR ILLNESS, POSSIBLE UNHEALTHY PRISON CONDITIONS AND THE QUALITY OF OVERALL MEDICAL CARE AFFORDED TO POLITICAL DETAINEES.
2. THE GROUP, ARRIVED ON 25 AUGUST, A LOCAL HOLIDAY, AND SPENT THE LONG WEEKEND VISITING UNOFFICIAL CONTACTS AND ATTEMPTING TO ARRANGE AN ENTRY INTO GOU CIRCLES. THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR, THEY MET WITH A SENIOR PONOFF OFFICIAL (FOREIGN POLICY DIRECTOR CARLOS GIAMPRUNO) ON 28 AUGUST, WHO ARRANGED MEETINGS WITH MINISTER OF PUBLIC

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HEALTH CANELIA; MINDEF RAVENNA (HIMSELF A PHYSICIAN); THE CHIEF OF THE GOU'S OFFICE FOR INFORMATION ON DETAINEES (COL. MAYNARD); AND THE CHIEF OF THE LOCAL MILITARY HOSPITAL. THE GROUP CALLED ON THE EMBASSY AUGUST 28 AND WERE BRIEFED BY POLOFFS ON EXTREME GOU RESISTANCE TO INQUIRIES ON BEHALF OF MORE NOTORIOUS TERRORISTS AND COMMUNIST PARTY (PCU) LEADERS. EMOFFS ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE RELATIVE LACK OF PREPARATION AUGURED ILL FOR THE MISSION. (GROUP HAD "INFORMED" URUGUAYAN AMBASSADOR IN PARIS OF TRIP AND ITS PURPOSE, BUT WITHOUT FOLLOWING UP TO ENSURE THAT GOU WAS INFORMED OF VISIT AND PREPARED TO MEET WITH THE GROUP.)
3. IN A CHANCE ENCOUNTER LATE IN THE VISIT, GROUP TOLD POLOFF THAT THEY HAD SEEN "EVERYTHING AND NOTHING". TREATMENT BY THE GOU HAD BEEN CORDIAL AND PLANDLY COOPERATIVE. BUT VISIT HAD BEEN UNPRODUCTIVE. ALTHOUGH THEY WERE NOT PERMITTED TO SEE INDIVIDUAL PRISONERS, THE GROUP WAS GIVEN ACCESS TO MILITARY HOSPITAL MEDICAL RECORDS, WHICH INDICATED

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY L. M. ... DATE 9/1/78

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THAT PRISON HEALTH CARE IS ADEQUATE WHEN A PRISONER IS ADMITTED TO THE HOSPITAL. THE VISIT'S ONLY TENSE MOMENT CAME WHEN THE GROUP, NOTICING THAT IT WAS UNDER SURVEILLANCE, LODGED A PROTEST, PRESUMABLY TO THE FENOFF WHICH WAS CO-ORDINATING THE GROUP'S ACTIVITIES.

4. PHYSICIANS INFORMED THE EMBASSY THAT THEY HAD PLANNED ORIGINALLY TO MAKE A JOINT VISIT WITH MEMBERS OF THEIR U.S. CHAPTER, BUT LATTER HAD DECIDED TO POSTPONE THEIR APPROACH TO GOU. (FYI: WE WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF THE DEPARTMENT COULD CONFIRM. IF TRUE, WE WOULD ADVISE THE SAME TYPE OF CAREFUL PREPLANNING THAT AIDED NAS AND ABA VISIT.)

5. COMMENT: EVEN THOUGH THE GROUP DROPPED IN WITHOUT ADVANCE NOTICE, IT WAS ACCORDED PROPER AND AT LEAST MINIMALLY

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COOPERATIVE TREATMENT BY THE GOU. THEIR STATED GOAL OF ENTERING INTO FRANK AND CONCERET DISCUSSIONS WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS CONCERNING IMPRISONED DOCTORS AND HEALTH CARE FOR DETAINEES WAS FRUSTPATED, PRIMARILY BY LACK OF EFFECTIVE PLANNING AND SPADEWORK. MORE IMPORTANTLY, PRISONERS ABOUT WHOM THEY WISHED TO INQUIRE WERE NOT CAREFULLY SELECTED. ALTHOUGH THE LIST OF "IMPRISONED DOCTORS" CONTAINED THE NORMAL RATION OF INNOCENTS AND TERRORISTS, THEIR LISTS OF "SICK PRISONERS" WERE HEAVILY WEIGHTED TOWARD THE LATTER, AND THEIR LIST OF "PRISONERS UNDER SPECIAL DETENTION", WHICH HAD NO APPARENT RELATION TO THE STATED GOALS OF THE GROUP, WAS VIPTUAL WHO'S WHO OF TUMPAMARO CHIEFTAINS. WE ADVISED THEM, AS DID MOST OF THEIR OTHER NON-GOU CONTACTS, THAT USE OF ANY BUT THE FIRST OF THESE LISTS WOULD FORECLOSE THE POSSIBILITY OF ANY FAVORABLE GOU RESPONSE. THE GROUP SUBMITTED ALL BUT THE "SPECIAL DETENTION" LIST TO THE GOU. THE GOVERNMENT IS AWARE OF THIS LIST, FOWEVER, THROUGH OTHER SOURCES. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE.

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